KING

AND BOTH

Houſes of Parliament,

Now ſitting at *Weſtminſter*.

BEING,

I. *A Repreſentation* of the *Cauſe* and *Sufferings* of the People, called *Quakers*, and what they deſire, ſignified.

II. *A Declaration* from the People, called *Quakers*, what they can ſay in ſtead of an Oath: Together with an Account of the Names of ſome of the Priſoners, called *Quakers*, in the ſeveral Goals in *England* and *Wales*, who have had the Sentence of *Premunire*, &c.

III. To the *Committee for Grievances*, ſome of the *Grievances* of the People called *Quakers*.

IV. Some *Wholſome Advice* and *Seaſonable Conſiderations*, tending to Peace and Concord: Which being rendred and delivered to ſome of the Members of each Houſe, only in Manuſcript (with a deſire they might ſo be read among them) therefore that they may the better take notice of them, they are rendred in Print, that they may peruſe them, and conſider the *Cauſe* and *Grievous Sufferings* of the Innocent, herein hinted and partly related.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year

INDEX

BOTH

A Representation *of the Cause and Sufferings of the People called,* Quakers, *and what they desire, signified.*

WEE are really a Conscientious People towards God, and as much as in us lies, we have exercised a Conscience void of Offence, both towards God and men, and we never at any time (since God made choice of us to be a peculiar People unto himself) endeavoured the disturbance of the Peace of the Government or Nation in and under which we have lived; but have behaved our selves in all good Conscience unto this day, and have followed Peace with all Men, and in all things. We have alwayes been actually conformable to the Laws of the Nation, so far as might be, without violating of our tender Consciences, and the Law of God therein. And when any thing hath been imposed upon us, which for Conscience-sake we could not actually conform unto, we have patiently conformed to suffer the penalty thereof, without any resistance, or secret seeking revenge; the Lord our God is witness, and you your selves right well know it. Nevertheless our Sufferings and Afflictions have been multiplied upon us to this day, and our burdens added unto by the divers Laws and Decrees which have been made against us, by which many have suffered Imprisonment unto Death, and many are Exiled, and several Hundreds remain in the several Goals of this Nation at this very day, many of whom are under sentence of Banishment, and many are *Præmunired, &c.* and nothing at all hath or can be justly charged against them, but only because they cannot for Conscience-sake towards God transgress the Commands of Christ (and the Apostle *James*) who expresly saith, *Swear not at all*: or else, because we Meet together to Wait upon God, and to Worship him in Spirit and in Truth, according as we are bound in Conscience, by the Spirit of the Lord to do; or else because we cannot Conform to that Worship, in which we are perswaded in our Consciences we shall not find acceptance with God, *&c.* And these things which relate unto Conscience, and do no way tend to raise or disturb the Peace of the Kingdom; therefore we cannot but judge that your selves must confess, that we ought to have the benefit of the Kings Promises from *Breda, &c.* which hitherto we have not had nor enjoyed. And these things, ye know, we have from time to time put you in mind of, and presented the cruelty of our manifold Sufferings unto you, to the end that you might consider thereof so as

might be eased, and enjoy our just Rights and Liberties in the exercise of our pure Consciences in things that appertain to the Faith and Worship of God.

And now once more in the patient long-suffering Spirit of the Lamb, we do represent unto you, our present Suffering-Estate, there being now in the several Goals of this Nation, above four hundred Persons, of which number seventy eight are under the Sentence of *Premunire*, some of whom have been detained several years, because for Conscience-sake they cannot *Swear*. And near a hundred are under the Sentence of *Transportation*, for Meeting to Worship God in Spirit; and the rest of them, which are a great number, are detained for the Causes aforesaid, of whom several have been kept divers years; besides forty four have been Banished for Meeting as aforesaid, not to return upon pain of Death. And two hundred have died in Prisons and on Board the Ship, being thither sent in order to Transportation within these last five years; committed for no other cause, but as aforesaid. And by these woful Sufferings, the Spirit of the Lord, and the Soules of his People are grieved, and we are assuredly confident and perswaded, that for these things sake, the Lord hath a controversie with this Nation, and his hand is stretched out in Judgement and displeasure against it; and certainly there is no way by which his hand may be stayed, and his future Judgements diverted, but by breaking these cruel Bonds of Oppression, and setting free the Oppressed out of Prison, and calling back the Banished, that they may come to their native Land; and so all that are under Restraint, and Exilement, and in Suffering for Conscience-sake, may be freed therefrom, and may be in a capacity to provide for themselves, and their present distressed Families, and may be enabled to pay such Taxes, for the maintaining the Peace and Government of the Kingdom, as they have been alwayes ready to do, when they were in a capacity, *&c.* that so *we may all live a peaceable and quiet Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

But if it be Objected by any; *That the Cause for which we Suffer, is not really matter of Conscience, but that through Stubbornness and Self-will we expose our selves to Suffering.* We Answer; That we know no more prevailing Argument to convince you, that its really for Conscience-sake that we suffer, then to present to your consideration, the greatness of our Sufferings and Patience therein: for, for refusing to Swear, and Meeting together to Worship God in Spirit, we are exposed to suffer even the loss of our Estates and Liberties, yea our Lives also, as many of us have already done; which Sufferings (Reason will judge) nothing could induce us to undergo, were it not *to keep a Conscience void of offence towards God.*

And

And now seeing these our manifold & grievous Sufferings have been and still are, only for the exercise of our pure Consciences towards God in keeping the Commands of Christ Jesus our Lord, and that our Principles and Practices are peaceable, and do no way tend to the disturbance of the Peace of the Government under which we live, we hope our state will be looked upon as it is, and so taken into consideration by you; for it's no new thing that we profess & practise, but the same that we have Precept from Christ and the Apostle for, Who saith, *Swear not at all, Mat.* 5. & *Jam.* 5. and for which we have President from the *Primitive Christians*, many of whom have endured manifold Sufferings, as we have done, for refusing to Swear, *&c.* which we might particularly mention, but for brevity's sake shall omit at this time, as believing many of you are not ignorant thereof. And although we cannot for Conscience-sake Swear at all, yet we never denied the equity or substance of the Law, in which it requireth the truth to be spoken, in point of Evidence or Judgement betwixt man and man; neither did we ever refuse to give our Word to live peaceably under the King and his Government, nor have we given any real cause that the contrary should be suspected; only we could not Swear, nor come under the Ceremony of an Oath for Conscience-sake: But if we had refused only the Oath of Allegiance, and could have Sworn in other Cases, there might have been a seeming cause of suspition concerning us, which there is none, since we refuse it in all Cases, and are known to be peaceable in our Lives and Conversations.

Therefore that which we have desired, and do desire at this time, is, *That our Word and Testimony may be taken, and accepted of upon all occasions without an Oath;* We being willing to undergo the penalty of Perjury, in case of false Evidence, or breach of our Word, or the same that is provided for refusing the Oath of Allegiance, and Judicial Oaths; or else what Penalty Ye shall in discretion judge meet to inflict upon us; which Penalty being mentioned by the Judges or Ministers of the Law, to the parties concerned, if any be suspected of falshood, or not to be Conscientious in their Word or Testimony, the Penalty may be binding to such, where Conscience may be suspected not to bind.

So for you to make some *Proviso* in the Law in this Case, on the behalf of them that are tender towards God, in refusing to swear at all; and that you will be pleased to pass some *ACT*, for the releasing out of their long and grievous Imprisonments, all those who suffer upon the account aforesaid (that we may once enjoy our just Rights and Liberties in the exercise of our Consciences, in the Service and Worship of God, without which this Nation cannot be truly happy or blessed) is

the

the thing which we hereby desire of you; Which if ye are pleased to grant, will be acceptable to the Lord and his People: But if you will not grant this our reasonable Request, we are resolved in the strength of the Lord to hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering, and to continue our Obedience to our Lord and Master Christ Jesus, in that same long-suffering Spirit, by which we have been upheld throughout all tryals unto this day, and shall commit our Cause to God, who is the Judge of all the Earth, and will do right.

However our desire is, That all those in present Sufferings for these matters of Conscience, may be released from their hard and tedious Imprisonments, and so let *Israel* go free, to Serve and Worship the Lord God, as he pleaseth and requires.

From us whose Names are here subscribed, on the behalf of all the Suffering People of God aforesaid.

Amor Stodard,	*George Whitehead,*	*Gerard Roberts,*
Gilbert Latye,	*Thomas Loe,*	*Samuel Newton,*
Ellis Hooks,	*Thomas Coveny,*	*William Crouch,*
Morgan Watkins,	*John Nelson,*	*Josiah Cole,*
Walter Mires,	*Abraham Shapton,*	*Thomas Yoksley.*

A Coppy of this was tendred to the High Chancellour of *England*, and another to the Speaker of the House of Commons, *&c.* in the *Ninth Moneth*, 1666.

A Declaration from the People, called Quakers, what they can ſay in ſtead of an OATH

THis Form of words which Chriſt hath laid down in *Matth.* 5. and the Apoſtle *James* taught in his general Epiſtle, *Ch.* 5. we who are called *Quakers*, can ſtand by and to.

Chriſt ſaid, *Ye have heard, that it hath been ſaid of old time, by them, Thou ſhalt not forſwear thy ſelf* (which was the falſe Oath) *but perform thy Oaths to the Lord*, which was the true Oaths, which were to be taken before the Judges, Officers and Magiſtrates, to end Controverſies, and be performed unto the Lord; but Chriſt ſaid, *Now I ſay unto you, Swear not at all*, &c. *but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay; for whatſoever is more than this, cometh of evil.* Therefore this *yea, yea*, and *nay, nay*, wherein Chriſt doubles his words, to make them of force, and ſets them over and above an Oath, we will ſtand by and to. And alſo in *James* the 5th. and 12th. the Apoſtle taught, and ſaid, *Above all things, my brethren, ſwear not; neither by Heaven, nor by Earth* (mark) *nor by any other Oath:* But he alſo ſets up that which is above an Oath, which is Chriſt's words; *Let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay.* Which Form of ſound words the Apoſtle doubles (as Chriſt did) when he ſaid, in his repeating over Chriſts words, *Ye ſhall ſwear no Oaths, leſt ye fall into condemnation.* Theſe are the Commands of Chriſt and the Apoſtle, which we will ſtand by, and to, (to wit) *Yea, yea*, and *Nay, nay.*

Alſo here are ſome Examples of the Primitive Chriſtians, and holy Martyrs, that kept the Commands of Chriſt, and of the Apoſtle, which ſpoke the Truth, and both denied and gave their Teſtimony againſt Swearing: For *Policarpus* a Martyr, who was, as is ſaid, *Johns* Diſciple, and Biſhop of *Smyrna*, 89 years of Age, when he was required by the Proconſul to Swear, he denied it, and ſaid, *He was a Chriſtian.* So it appears at that time Chriſtians did not Swear, *Acts and Mon. fol.* 55. *Vol.* 2. And alſo *Baſillides* Martyr, being an Officer among the Souldiers, being required to Swear before a Judge, ſaid plainly, *That it was not lawful to Swear, Lib.* 6. *Cap.* 6. *Pag.* 98. So it appears plainly, that it was the

the Mark of a Christian, not to Swear. And the *Waldenses*, whose Names are so famous amongst the Reformed Churches, and who are said immediately to succeed the Apostles, and were the most antient and true Protestants, professed it to be no way lawful for a *Christian to Swear*. And Bishop *Usher*, late of *Armath*, Primate of *Ireland*, pleaded their Cause against the Jesuites, in his Book, *De Successione*, *Cap.* 6.

The *Plowman* in his *Complaint*, saith, *Lord, thou gavest us a Command of truth, in bidding us to say*, Yea, yea, *and* Nay, nay, *and* swear for nothing; *but Lord, he that calls himself thy Vicar on Earth, hath broken thy Commandment, for he maketh a Law, and compelleth men to Swear*, Act. *and* Mon. *Vol.* 1. *fol.* 527. *and* 585.

Here you may see how Swearing came up among Christians

And *John Wickliffe*, whose Works are so much esteemed by the Protestants, his judgement was, *That all Oaths, which be made for any Contract or Civil Bargain betwixt man and man, be unlawful.* And *John Hus*, and *Jerome* of *Prague*, were burnt [for holding his Opinion] by the Papists, *fol.* 653.

And *Walter Brute*, who was a Teacher of Gods People, saith concerning Swearing, *I believe and obey the Doctrine of Almighty God, and my Master Christ Jesus, which teacheth, That Christian men in affirming the Truth, should pass the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees of the Old Testament, or else he excludes them from the Kingdom of Heaven*; for he saith, *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And as concerning Oaths, he saith, *It hath been said, by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but perform thy Oaths to the Lord: But I say to you now, Swear not at all; but let your Yea, be yea, and Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, comes of evil. And therefore as the perfection of the antient men in the Old Testament was, not to forswear themselves, so the perfection of Christian men is, not to Swear at all, because they are so commanded of Christ, whose Command in no case must be broken.*

Origan saith, *It behoves a man who lives according to the Gospel, not to Swear at all.* And *Jerome*, an antient Father and Teacher of the Church, which the Protestants own, saith, *That the great Evangelical sincerity and Truth admits not of an Oath, since every true saying is equivalent thereunto.*

Theophilact, an antient Father of the Church, whom the Protestants own, saith, upon *Matth.* 5. concerning Oaths, *Learn hence that under the Law, it was no evil for one to Swear, but since the coming of Christ, it is evil as is Circumcision.* And was it not the principal solution given by *Ambrose*, *That a Christian should not Swear at all.*

And

And Bishop *Gauden* saith, *A true Christians Oath is needless, and an evil mans Oath is worthy of no more credit than a Lyar*, Pag. 17. and 41. of his Book concerning *Swearing*.

Otho, Bishop of *Banbergenses* in *Germany*, and *Basilius* of *Calcedon*, refused to Swear; and afterwards there was an Act granted to tender Christians, that their *Yea*, and *Nay*, might be taken, to testify the Truth in stead of an Oath: And likewise you may see more Examples, for the *Essean*s amongst the *Jews* refused to Swear, as *Josephus* witnesseth. Likewise *Basil* commends *Chinas*, a famous *Greek*, who suffered a Fine of three Talents, rather than he would save it by Swearing to the loss of his Honour. And also many in Queen *Mary*'s dayes suffered Martyrdome, that refused to Swear, as you may read in the *Acts* and *Monuments*. And also another Example you may see, *Mat.* 18. *ver.* 17. where Christ saith in the Gospel-times to the Church, *That by the mouth of two or three Witnesses, every word may be established*: And this Christ spake in matter of differences that might happen among Christians; but said nothing of an Oath, for Oaths he forbad before. And the Apostle taught, *That every man should speak the Truth to his Neighbour*; not that they should Swear the Truth; and also tells the Christian Church, *That in the mouth of two or three Witnesses, every word should be established*, and not in the mouth of two or three Swearers, 2 *Cor.* 13. 1. So here you may see that it is no new thing to deny Swearing, for Christ, and the Apostles, and the antient Fathers, and the holy Martyrs, testified against it and denied it.

And we cannot give forth a better Form of Words to testify the truth, than that which Christ hath laid down, which is, *Yea*, *yea*, and *Nay*, *nay*, which the Apostle, and the Fathers, and the Martyrs, Preached, and Practised, and Suffered for; and if we, when we are called to any Office, or upon a Jury, or to bear Witness, do break our *Yea*, *yea*, or our *Nay*, *nay*, which is Christ's Form of sound Words, and which the Apostles Preached, and the Martyrs Suffered for, which we stand to and by; then let us suffer the same Penalty as they that can Swear and break their Oaths. For all Oaths, Vows, Promises, Types, Shadows, and Figures, which were among the Jews, Christ ends, and sets up *Yea*, *yea*, and *Nay*, *nay*, above them, which we shall stand by and to, who are Peaceable, and have never forfeited our Liberty; and do owe nothing but Peace and good Will towards the King, and all Men, and desire all mens good and prosperity in the Everlasting Life.

An Account of the Names of some of the Prisoners, called Quakers, *in the several Goals in* England *and* Wales, *who have had the Sentence of* Premunire *past against them, because for Conscience sake they could not Swear. And some have had their Estates, and Goods, and Cattel taken away. Also the Time how long they have lain in Prison.*

Oxf. sh. { *Will. Pettifer,* / *Hen. Philipps,* } Both *Premunired*, and one of them hath remained in Prison, three Years and ten Moneths, and the other two Years and upwards.

Warwick sh. { *Tho. Goodayre* / *Tho. Cooke,* / *Rich. Field,* / *Will. Parr,* / *Hen. Jackson,* / *Tho. Feild,* / *Wil. Dewsbury* / *Will. Beventon* / *Jacob Gibbs,* / *Paul Newman* / *Joh. Carpenter* / *Jam. Wagstaff* / *Will. Lucas,* / *Mary Cowper* / *Mary Page* died a Prisoner } These without any legal Tryal, or any Sentence, or Judgement past against them, in the open Court or Sessions, were entred in the Callender, to remain Prisoners during their Lives, where they have been detained, some of them, five Years, and the rest, two Years and ten Moneths.

Lancashire. { *Margaret Fell,* } Premunired, and hath remained in a cold, smoky, bad Prison near three Years.

Westmerland, { *Franc. Howgil,* } Premunired, and hath remained in Prison three Years.

Linc. sh. { *John Williamson,* / *Ralph Harebottle,* } Both Sentenced for refusing to Swear, and have remained in Prison near three Years.

Sussex.

Sussex. John Ellis, John Wenham, Rich. Serase, Walt. Serase, Tho. Avery, John Martin, Moses French, Nich. Beard, Steph. Eager, Ambr. Rigge, Will. Geereing.

All Prisoners upon a *Premunire*; some of which have remained Prisoners there above four Years, though they were proceeded against contrary to Law and Equity.

Norfolk. Edw. Shooter, Rob. Turner, Tho. Waler, Jos Whitworth, John Yoksley, Ben. Townsend, Jos. Townsend, Anth. Preston, Joh. Heslewood.

These had a false Inditement drawn against them, to which they refused to plead; nevertheless they had a Sentence of *Premunire* past against them, and have remained Prisoners near three Years.

Worcester. Robert Smith, Richard Payton. Both *Premunired*, and have been Prisoners about four Years.

Stafford. Thomas Taylor. *Premunired*, and hath been Prisoner about four Years.

Bishoprick. Jam. Langstaffe. Hath remained in Prison above 4 Years.

Berksh. Geo. Lambel, Leonard Key, Joseph Cole, Leonard Cole, Benjam. Cole, Tho. Curtis, Rob. Pecock, Will. Yeate, John Payne, James Lavel, Walt. Emerton, Tho. Bartlet, John Boult, Tho. Speed, Will. Lambel, Tho. Tudway, Will. Thomson, Anth. Sadler, Rich. Green, Jam. Marlow, John True.

These 21. persons had the Sentence of *Premunire* past against them, in the first Moneth, One thousand six hundred sixty five, and were most of them Prisoners about two years before.

Northampton. *Thomas Dent*, *George Eire*, Have been *Premunired* one year and a half, and ſtill remain Priſoners.

Cumberland. *Thomas Stordy*, and *Stephen Pearſon*, Both had the Sentence of *Premunire* paſt upon them, and have remained Priſoners about four Years.

Dorſet ſh. *John Pitman*, *William Scot*, *Charles Noak*, *Angel Smith*, *Francis Bowne*, *And. Downton*. Are all *Premunired*, and have been Priſoners three Years and about ſeven Moneths.

Somerſet ſh. Imprisoned, the

	day.	mo.	year
Tho. Budd, *John Collins*,	2	12	61
John Adams, *Mat. Perrin*,	26	5	62
Will. Roach, *Joh. Denbury*, *Rice Morice*, *George Clapp*, *Nath. Parke*	27	5	62
John Evans,	died Priſoner		
Joſeph Pearce	30	5	62
John Cary, *Giles Brook*,	3	6	62
Amos Parſons		6	62
Henry Turner	7	6	62
Hen. Lambert		9	62
And. Raymond	28	7	62

All theſe had the Sentence of *Premunire* paſt upon them, moſt of them being very poor men, ſeveral of whom having great charges of Children, and Families, and little elſe to maintain them but their daily labour; and the Goaler was ſtrictly charged that he ſhould keep them cloſe Priſoners, and not ſuffer them to work in the Goal, nor ſuffer their Friends to relieve them.

Montgomery ſh. *Will. Lewis*, *Marg. Lewis*, *Edw. Evans*, *Kath. Evans*, *Rich. Davis*, *Hugh Davis*, *Charles Lloyd*, *Cad. Edwards*, *Hum. Winſon*, *And. Lawrence*, *Sarah Wilſon*. All committed to Priſon for refuſing to Swear, and Sentenced to remain ſtill Priſoners in *Welſh-Poole*.

Carmarthen. *James Pilton*, *Premunired*, and kept a Priſoner ſeveral years in *Carmarthen* Caſtle.

And

And besides these before mentioned, there are at this time 341 Prisoners in Prison, in several Goals in *England*, for Meeting together to Worship God, and for denying to Swear, and for other Causes relating to Conscience; and two hundred have died in Prisons, and on board the Ship, being thither sent to be Transported, within these last five Years, for the Causes aforesaid, being crowded by great Numbers into close, stinking, smoky, cold, unwholsome places, where many have perished and lost their Lives.

So these things we lay before you, in the fear and Wisdom of God to consider of them, and to set the Innocent and Oppressed at Liberty, from under their cruel Bondage and Oppression.

[redacted]

To the Committee for Grievances.

Here are some of the Grievances of the People of God, called QUAKERS, *laid before You to consider of.*

FIrst, Many of them are almost spoiled and ruined in their Persons and Estates, and all is for keeping a good Conscience towards God, though we have the Word of a King, that none shall be called in question for matters of Religion so long as they live Peaceably: And we have not forfeited our Liberty, and yet many are made Fatherless and Widows; some by Banishment (Husband from Wife and Children) from their Countries native soile into Forreign parts, who are exposed to much hardness.

And many by long and cruel hard Imprisonments, under cruel Goalers, have died in Prison, since the King came in, to the number of two hundred.

And many lie now in Prison to the number of four hundred; one hundred of which are under sentence of Transportation.

And many are *Premunired*, and to be kept in Prison during the King's pleasure, to the number of seventy and eight Persons.

Oh what a Cry here is of the Fatherless and Widowes, and of the

Alls &c.

afflicted and Oppressed, which surely is (and will be) entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath.

And many are Excommunicated and cast into Prison by the Bishops, who never sent their Priests to exhort, nor teach, nor instruct them.

And you know the Bishops left us about twenty years ago, and left us to *Independants*, and *Presbyterians*, and others who did persecute us because we could not joyn to them and their Principles, and cast many into Prisons, some to Death; and spoiled our goods and made havock of our Persons, as you know well enough; whom the Lord did overturn.

And now you know this late Act, which was made for those who meet to plot and contrive mischief, and hold dangerous Principles, and to raise Insurrections against the King; by which not above the number of five may meet, which (such a number) may do more mischief than a hundred; for they may speak one to another that which they would not speak to a multitude. But the People of God, called *Quakers*, are not such persons as the Act is grounded upon, which we believe you do know in your Consciences, though many have been Banished, and many hundreds Imprisoned, and some to Death, and their Goods spoiled, and all this for meeting together to Worship God, who are peaceable towards the King, and all men, and desire nothing but their everlasting good.

And also the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, which were made in King *James* his days, about the time of the Gunpowder-Plot, wherein the Papists would have blown up the King and Parliament: These Oaths are put to us as a snare, because they know we cannot swear at all, in obedience to the Command of Christ, *Mat.* 5 and *Jam.* 5. through which many have been cast into Prison, and *Premunired*, and kept in such places where you would not keep your Horses and Doggs. And though we have often proffered, and do still proffer unto you, That if we break our *Yea*, *yea*, and *Nay*, *nay*, which was Christ's and the Apostles Doctrine and Command, who denied Oaths, whose Commandment we can no wayes break; then let us suffer as they that break their Oaths, and as perjured persons. For you know what Estate the Country stands in now, and how it stands with Husband-men and Farmers, and Labouring-men; the scarceness of money with them to pay their Rents, Taxes, and Assessments: And therefore how can men pay their Rents, Taxes, and Assessments, and maintain their Families, who are cast into Prison (industrious men) for the Worshipping of God, and keeping the Commands of Christ, some four or five years together. And besides the Act against *Quakers*, though they cast them

into

into Prison by the Act, yet they spoil their Goods besides, as many may be instanced.

And also the Bishops and Clergy have cast many into Prisons, and keep many in Prisons, yea several to Death, through which they have made many Widows and Fatherless: And although they have cast them into Prisons, yet spoil their Goods besides, to the value of double and treble, yea (sometimes) ten times the value of what was first demanded; driving away their Cows & Horses, and taking their houshold Goods, to the ruining of many Families, and oppressing many Widows and Fatherless, as many Goals do testify. And these have not been Christian acts of Charity, nor fruits of the Ministry of the Gospel: for the Apostle saith, *A Bishop must not be given to filthy lucre, or covetous, nor a striker: For he coveted no Mans Silver, Gold, nor Apparel, that he might be an example to all that followed him.*

And these things we thought meet to lay before the Committee, which are to hear and redress the Grievances, that you might consider them in the Wisdom of God, and present them to the Parliament, that some speedy course may be taken for the easing and relieving of the Innocent and Oppressed, of their heavy Burdens and grievous Oppressions, which they have long and do still groan under.

From the People of God, called Quakers, *which owe nothing but Love, Peace, and Good-Will to you all.*

To

TO THE

KING

AND BOTH

Houſes of Parliament,

A DECLARATION,

Wherein is ſome wholſome Advice and reaſonable Conſiderations, tending to Peace and Concord.

From the People called QUAKERS.

FOraſmuch as we are perſwaded, that many of you by that Knowledge and experience which ye have of our Principles and Practiſes are ſatisfied, that we are an Innocent & Harmleſs People, and of peaceable diſpoſition, why ſhould we be expoſed to utter Ruine & Deſtruction, by penal Laws, ſome of which Ye have made, and all which Ye have power to abrogate, and in Juſtice you may and ought to do it; becauſe they puniſh us for keeping our Conſciences void of offence towards God, whereby we neither can, nor do injure any Man.

1. For firſt, It is not any diſhonour to the King, that we fear God, and dare not break any of his Commands, but rather an honour and ſecurity to him, and an eaſe to Government: Becauſe the Fear of God and that reſpect we have to his Laws, keeps us from deviſing or working wickedneſs againſt the King or any Man.

2. It cannot be prejudicial to Government, nor to the Governed, that we meet together peaceably (as we have uſed to do) to Worſhip God in Spirit and in Truth, as we are perſwaded in our own minds we ought

ought to do, according to the example of the Primitive Church, because, *every one of us must give account to God for himself. Let us therefore not judge one another*, saith the Apostle, *but rather judge this, not to put a stumbling block, nor occasion to fall, in one anothers way.* Rom. 14. 12, 13.

3. It is not destructive to Government, nor to the Governed, that we cannot receive for Doctrine the Commandments of Men, nor worship according to their Traditions and Prescriptions, which occasioned us to suffer by the former Powers; For Christ said, *Mat. 9. Such worship in vain.* And such as do worship in a wrong way (not compelling others thereto) hurt only themselves. *Because every one shall receive a reward according to his own works, whether good or evil,* Rev. 22. 12. And forasmuch as the Apostle said, *Rom. 14. 23. That whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin;* no man by outward Law should be compelled to practise what he believes he ought not, nor restrained from what he is perswaded he ought to do, except his Faith or Perswasion tend to the outward hurt and destruction of others, which ours doth not. For we believe Christs Doctrine, and are perswaded to do to all men as we would be done by.

Objection. But some do Object, and say to us, *You believe and are perswaded that ye ought not to Swear in any Case, and that makes you inconsistent with Government, and may be hurtful and destructive to others besides your selves. For by our Law, without an Oath, no Magistrate can be made, nor Justice done; because thereby the truth and falshood in Cases is tried out.*

Answer. To which we thus Answer: That if the end of administring an Oath to Magistrates, Officers, Jurors and Witnesses, be to make them do justly in their places, and speak the Truth, Then we both can and shall answer the end for which an Oath is administred, without an Oath, according to the Form of sound words, which Christ hath laid down, which is, *Yea, yea,* and *Nay, nay*; for in our hearts God hath placed his fear, which brings us to obey Christs Command, and we are sensible that he is a present Witness of all our Actions and Words, and by him that takes away sin, unbelief, and strife, which are the occasion of Oaths, we are bound to speak the Truth, and to do justly in our places, according to every righteous Law, which they that know us are satisfied in, and can witness: Therefore forasmuch as ye, as well as we, do call Christ Lord, who hath said, *Swear not at all, &c. but let your yea, be yea and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more cometh of evil,* Mat. 5. 34. &c. let us suffer no more for keeping his Precepts, but make a Law, that our *Yea, yea,* and *Nay, nay,* which are the words of Christ

and the true Christians in the Primitive times, *Jam.* 5. 12. may b
taken without an Oath; and if we do unjustly in any Place or Offic
that we are capable of, or in trying of Causes, or if we speak falsly whe
in the presence of Authority we are called to evidence the Truth, an
break our *Yea*, and *Nay*; then let us suffer the same punishment as the
do that do forswear themselves; so may Christ's Doctrine be obeyed
and the Truth in all cases tried out, and no man wronged, but Justic
may be done. So shall we appear to be consistent with Governmen
forasmuch as our Lives answer the main ends thereof, we ought not
be ruined and destroyed, as hitherto we have been, by long and tedi
our Imprisonments, and some till Death; by Fines, and by spoiling
our Goods, and by Exile and Banishment, and other things of like na
ture, which would make a Volumn to rehearse, that have been inflict
ed upon us, for not conforming to the National Worship, and fo
meeting together to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, as he re
quires us; and for obeying the Doctrine of Christ, in refusing t
Swear. And now you being the Legislative Power of the Nation,
whom it belongs to redress these and the like Grievances, we propo
these things to your serious considerations.

First, Whether Persecution for difference in Religion and Wor
ship, with the many Injuries, Wrongs and Oppressions, that hath to
gether with it, been inflicted upon innocent harmless People, fearin
God, be not one cause of the heavy Judgements of God th
are come upon the Land? and if so, Whether it behoves you not
put a stop to Persecution, by making void and of none effect thos
Laws which have been made, tending to uphold only one sort of Reli
gion & Worshippers, and to ruine and destroy all such as dissent fro
them, though they may be as neat the Truth, and as tender to God
the other, for any thing that the Law-makers know, who pretend no
to infallibility of Judgement in things that are Divine.

Secondly, Consider, That if ye do take away all such Laws, as d
tend to force a Uniformity in Worship, amongst persons that are not i
Unity, and do give free Liberty to every man to worship God, as i
conscience he is perswaded, and believes he ought to do; then yo
will ease the Magistrates of a great deal of burthen and fruitless trou
ble that now is put upon them; whereby you may purchase to you
selves great Renown, and settle the Nation in Peace and Tranquility
and give satisfaction unto all People, except those that are of a selfi
spirit, and so byassed by Interest, that they are not willing to do unt
others as they would be done unto; nor to allow that Liberty to othe
which they would have allowed to themselves, casting the Law of Chri
behind their backs.

Thirdly

Thirdly, Consider, Whether it be safe and consistent with common good, to gratify those which are so selfish, and byassed by their own Interest, that they will not do unto others as they would have others do unto them, and thereby disoblige all the rest, who are as free born, and as good Subjects as themselves; and have more pious and noble Minds, than to think that Error is like to prevail against the Truth of the Gospel, which by its own power hath prevailed against both Error and Heathenisme, without Magistrates force, and so it shall ever do. For we believe the Sentence of the *Wise Man*, who said, *That Truth is strongest of all.*

Fourthly, Consider, That the greatest part of People in this Nation, that are above the Age of sixteen years, upon whom Conformity is imposed, were not Educated in the Religion and Worship set down in the Liturgy, but in other different Worships and Religions, and that some of them by such Ministers as did then, and do now, many of them Conform for their own ends; and are joyned with those High-Priests which put on the Civil Magistrates to drive those, which if they were true Shepherds they should gently lead, and not put the Magistrate (who of right is their Superiour) to do the executive part, which is the most drudging part of Persecution, which they account themselves too sacred to do. But how hardly men are driven from that Religion wherein they have been educated, unto another, without something be offered which is of a convincing and satisfactory nature, ye your selves may judge.

Fifthly, Consider, That Uniformity in Religion and Worship, were it of absolute necessity to the well-being of the Nation, is not to be attained unto by outward force, for that reaches not the Conscience, nor alters the Understanding nor the Opinions of Men, which are as different as the Stars in their Courses: And ye cannot by a Law make them all of one Nature and Magnitude, neither is it necessary, forasmuch as they declare the Wisdom and Power of God as they are. So read in the Book of the Creatures, and Wisdom will teach you, That the Flowers of the Field, though they differ in Colour, Smell and Virtue, may grow well enough together upon the Earth: Even so may the Inhabitants of this Nation, dwell Peaceably together in it, though they differ as much in Judgement and Practise in matters of Religion; especially, if ye make and establish a firm Decree, that they shall not impose any thing of that nature one upon another, but by a perswasive spiritual power.

Sixthly, Consider, Is it not a sad thing, and contrary to the Law of Equity, which teacheth every man to do as he would be done unto,

that so great a number of Families, as mostly for Conscience sake cannot conform, should be ruined and destroyed by Fines, and spoiling of their Goods, and that so many Widdows and Fatherless should be made by long and cruel Imprisonment until Death, and by Banishment, as have been already, and are like to be, if remedy be not provided. Oh consider, what decay of Husbandry and Trade, and what Weakness and Calamity it will bring in and upon this Nation, and what advantage it will be to Forreigners, if ye do suffer to be ruined, and destroyed by Fines, or tedious Imprisonments, and by Banishment, so many thousands of the laborious, and Industrious Inhabitants of this Land, as dare not forsake the assembling of themselves together, to Worship God, in Spirit and Truth, according to the Apostles Doctrine, nor conform to the National Worship, nor take an Oath; for which cause we have suffered much, and can say, from the bottom of our hearts, *The Lord forgive them that have been the Cause of it.* But upon these Considerations, and many other that might be offered, but for brevity sake, we Desire and Advise you to put a stop to Persecution, and let no any more be Fined, nor Imprisoned, nor Banished, nor otherwise Destroyed, for the exercise of their Consciences towards God, whilest they are void of offence towards men, nor for different practises of Religion; But let the Prison Doors be opened, and the Oppressed go free, and call home the Banished, that Mothers may rejoyce in their Children, and Wives in their Husbands, and one Brother and near Relation to another, that we all that are Inhabitants in this Nation may live together as a Family in the Peace and Love of God; so may he be entreated to turn his Wrath away from this Land, and to shower down Blessings upon us.

Our Principle is to bring all into a peaceable life, out of those things that are evil, that the Law of God, and every Law of Man that is grounded upon Reason and Equity, takes hold upon, and therein we are one with Justice. Therefore distinguish between those whose Principles leade to Violence, or other Evils that the Law of God (and of Man, which is equal) takes hold upon, and us who are one with Justice, and lead from those things into a peaceable life, as much as in us lies with all men, which is according to the practice of the *Primitive Christians*.

John Whitehead, Alexander Parker, Leonard Fell.

A Poſcript.

Oh Friends!

LET none be Perſecuted about Church-Religion, or Worſhip, or matter of Conſcience towards God; for that was not the way of the Apoſtles: If they went into everlaſting Puniſhment that did not Viſit Chriſt in Priſon, in his Members, what will become of them that caſt him into Priſon where he is made manifeſt? *for the Kingdom of God ſtands not in Meats, nor Drinks, nor Dayes*, nor Holy-Dayes, nor eating Fiſh on ſome dayes, and Fleſh on other dayes, nor White Coats, nor Black Coats, Tippets and Hoods, nor outward Stone and Wooden Croſſes, nor outward things; but in *Power, Righteouſneſs, Faith, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*. Oh let not Chriſtians Perſecute one another about ſuch things *which the Kingdom of God ſtands not in*: And them that call themſelves Miniſters and Biſhops, which have gotten themſelves great Benefices, and Biſhopricks, who perſecute Innocent People which cannot give them maintenance to put into their mouths, who knows this was not the way of the Apoſtles, who freely received and freely gave, nor of the Prophets, who ſaid, *All that thirſt, come freely, without money and without price*; nor like *Job*, in the 28 *Chapter*, who ſaid, *Wiſdom could not be purchaſed for gold nor ſilver; but the Fear of the Lord was the beginning of it*. And is it not a hard thing that Chriſtians ſhould be forced to Swear in the Goſpel-times, when as in the Goſpel-times among Chriſtians, it was the Command of Chriſt and the Apoſtles not to Swear, but the Truth ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the mouth of two or three Witneſſes, in the Goſpel-times, according to Chriſt and the Apoſtles. And ſo remember Chriſts words who ſaid, *They did not know what Spirit they were of, that perſecuted and deſtroyed mens Lives about Religion*; and ſo therefore, come into that mind of Chriſt, who ſaid, *He came not to deſtroy mens Lives*, &c. And you know that no man will truſt his Body or his Spirit with them that do not know *what ſpirit they be of themſelves*. And remember, the wicked Servant, after his Lord had forgiven him his Debt, he took his fellow-ſervant by the throat, and ſaid, *Pay that thou oweſt me; and took him and caſt him into Priſon*: Did not the Lord ſay to this Servant, *Thou ought'eſt to have forgiven thy fellow-ſervant*. So are not you all fel-

low-

low-servants? and ought not you to forgive one another? and did he not *take him* (that did not forgive his fellow-servant) *and cast him into Prison, till he had paid him the utmost Farthing*? And doth not Christ say, *So ought men to forgive one another as they would be forgiven*? And how can you say the Lords Prayer, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them their trespass against us*? And so here, Are any of you forgiven that do not forgive? *Where is Faith that works by Love*? Was not all the Prophets and Apostles Persecuted, and called *Fools*, and *Bablers*, and *Madmen*, and *Deceivers*, by the publick Professors of those times? and will not he *that is born of the flesh, persecute him that is born of the Spirit*? And was it not, and is it not, *Adams* first-birth, *Cain*, that persecutes the second-birth? And, *They that live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer Persecution*. And you know it was not the work of the Apostles to Convert People by Swords and Goals, to make them bend to their Religion; this was not the weapons they converted withal; this makes but Hypocrites, which will bow to save their Estates and Liberty. Doth not the Apostle say, *what is not of Faith is Sin*; and so to bring People to act against their Conscience (for is not that the Throne of God?) and against their Faith, is it not *that*, that brings them to sin? So where is *Long-suffering*, where is *Tenderness*, where is *Compassion*, where is the *Practice of the Apostles, who stopped the mouthes of Gainsayers; who coveted no mans Gold, nor Silver, nor Apparrel, that they might be Examples to all that followed them*? How is this Example lost amongst the Bishops and Priests, that take the Gold, and Silver, and Apparrel of such people that they do not preach to? This is not *Glad-tydings*, nor *the Gospel of Peace*, to cast people into Prison for Means and Maintenance, and there keeping them till Death, which makes many Widows and Fatherless; this was neither the Prophets, nor Apostles, nor Christs practice, as you may read throughout the Scriptures; for the Power and the Spirit, People have left which the Apostles were in: therefore they are gone into Heaps, and are not in the Unity and Fellowship of the Spirit; which Spirit and Power the Apostles were in, God is bringing his People into, through which they cannot yeeld, to that that is got up since the Apostles dayes. Oh therefore mind that Power and Spirit that you may come into the love of God, which fulfills the Law of Christ; for Love edifies the People, and builds them up, which for want of this Love, People tear one another to pieces, and cannot build up one another, nor edify one another; and there is such a hatred got up in people in Christendom, that they can hardly hear one another speak of the things of God; so this shews, that they want both Love and Reverence to God and his things, which should be otherwise.

THE END.

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